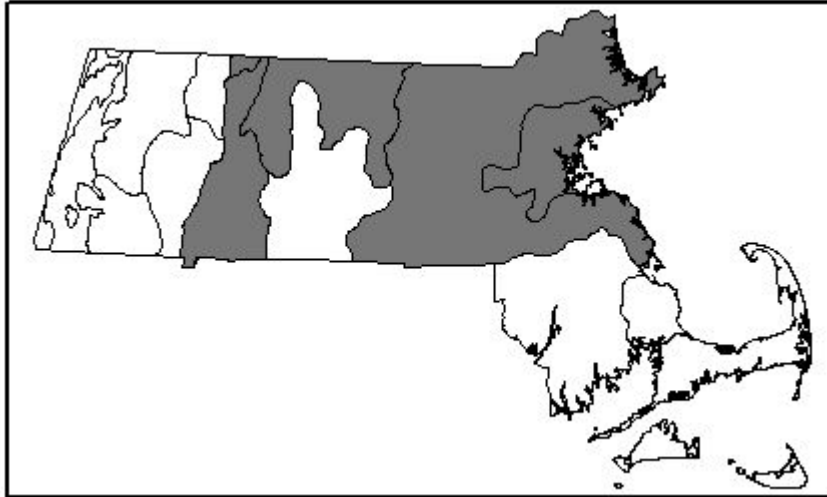


Community Name: CIRCUMNEUTRAL TALUS FOREST / WOODLAND

Community Code: CT1B1A2000

SRANK: S3



Concept: Open to closed canopy on boulder strewn slopes with scattered and clumped trees, tall shrubs, and a lower layer dominated by vines and ferns. There is often a gradient of vegetation, with exposed rocks at the base of the cliff above the talus slope, and gradually more trees to the base of the slope. Small slopes may have canopy coverage from surrounding trees.

Environmental Setting: Community develops on dry to mesic, not very acidic talus slopes of basalt or traprock, often below cliffs or rock outcrops. Forest grades into surrounding forests which are usually taller and more diverse. Open talus areas are drier, and rocks are often covered by lichens.

Vegetation Description: A mixture of deciduous forest species contribute to the canopy cover, including sugar and red maples (*Acer saccharum* and *A. rubrum*), black and paper birch (*Betula lenta* and *B. papyrifera*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), hickory (*Carya glabra/ovalis*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), and subcanopy species hop hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) and striped maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*). Shrubs include round-leaved dogwood (also called talus dogwood) (*Cornus rugosa*), hazelnut (*Corylus* spp.), witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), maple-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*), and bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*). Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), and occasionally clematis (*Clematis* spp.) and climbing fumitory (*Adlumia fungosa*) climb over the rocks and other plants. Marginal wood-fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*), common polypody (*Polypodium virginianum*), and the debatably exotic herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*) are major components of the sparse herbaceous layer, which includes scattered grasses and sedges.

Associations:

Habitat Values for Associated Fauna: Most animals are not sensitive to the pH of the substrate, but respond to the size of boulders, cover, moisture, and surroundings of the talus slope. Porcupines (*Erethizon dorsatum*) den in large boulder fields and turkey vultures (*Cathartes aura*) make nests in other large boulder field, but snakes such as Black rat snake (*Elaphe obsoleta*) have hibernating dens in talus with smaller stones.

Associated Rare Plants:

ADLUMIA FUNGOSA	CLIMBING FUMITORY	T
CLEMATIS OCCIDENTALIS	PURPLE CLEMATIS	SC
LESPEDeza VIOLACEA	VIOLET BUSH-CLOVER	- WL
SPHENOPHOLIS NITIDA	SHINING WEDGEGRASS	T

Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Associated Rare Animals:

ELAPHE OBSOLETA

BLACK RAT SNAKE

E

**Examples with
Public Access:**

Prospect Hill Park, Waltham; Horn Pond Mountain, Woburn; Mt. Tom State Reservation,
Northampton; Rocky Mt. Park, Greenfield.

Threats:

Management Needs:

Synonyms

USNVC/TNC:

Includes: *Tilia americana* - *Fraxinus americana* Woodland Alliance -- *Tilia americana* - *Fraxinus americana* - (*Acer saccharum*) / *Geranium robertianum* Woodland [CEGL005058] and *Tilia americana* - *Fraxinus americana* - *Acer spicatum* / *Cystopteris fragilis* Woodland [CEGL006204].

MA (old name):

SNE CIRCUMNEUTRAL TALUS FOREST/WOODLAND.

ME:

Circumneutral Talus Community.

NH:

part of: Rich Appalachian oak-hickory talus forest/ Woodlands; Rich red oak- sugar maple/ ironwood talus Forest/ Woodlands -- Mesic enriched sugar maple talus variant and Dry rich red oak- ironwood talus variant Red oak- black birch/ marginal woodfern talus Forest/ Woodlands.

VT:

Part of: Northern Hardwoods talus woodland.

NY:

Includes: Shale talus slope woodland, and part of Acidic talus slope woodland.

CT:

Includes: *Campanula rotundifolia* - *Lechea tenuifolia* Scarcely Vegetated Talus.

RI:

Not described.

Weatherbee:

Within Mesic Northern Hardwood forest community.

Author:

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Date:

7/1/99